

OGC Has Reviewed

The Director

17 January 1949

Assistant General Counsel

Omnibus Espionage Bill.

Your attention is called to the fact that Attorney General Clark has now introduced the Omnibus Espionage bill. The Bureau of the Budget has forced him to make several substantial changes before permitting his introduction. However, in case the press should ask us for any comments on the bill, your attention is called to the following salient features:

a. The bill patches a couple of technical loopholes in the present espionage laws which are helpful. However, we have always felt that the espionage laws are so patched now that the best plan would be for an entirely new codification of the espionage laws. The whole problem is basically one of internal security, in which we have only an observer's interest.

b. The bill would amend the Foreign Agents Registration Act by requiring the registration of persons who have knowledge of or have received instruction in the espionage, counter-espionage or sabotage service or techniques of a foreign government or foreign political party. We had objected to this provision insofar as it might apply to CIA and make available through registration a roster of CIA personnel, as well as personnel who had received instructions through service with G-2, A-2, ONI, State and Treasury. This section has now been modified to exclude those Americans who received such instruction through military service or service in the Government of the United States.

c. The provisions regarding wire tapping again affect the internal security of the United States, and are not subject to comment by us. The bill provides not only for the normal wire tapping, but also allows G-2, A-2, ONI and the FBI (on the authority of the Attorney General) to demand copies of cables and telegrams.

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